



US009787278B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Abdo

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,787,278 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Oct. 10, 2017**

(54) **LOSSLESS MICROWAVE SWITCH BASED ON TUNABLE FILTERS FOR QUANTUM INFORMATION PROCESSING**

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

CN	102723960 A	10/2012
CN	203674781 U	6/2014
CN	104409809 A	3/2015

(71) Applicant: **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION**, Armonk, NY (US)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

(72) Inventor: **Baleegh Abdo**, Carmel, NY (US)

Baleegh Abdo., "Lossless Microwave Switch Based on Tunable Filters for Quantum Information Processing", U.S. Appl. No. 15/289,687, filed Oct. 10, 2016.

(73) Assignee: **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION**, New York, NY (US)

Chapman et al., "General Purpose Multiplexing Device for Cryogenic Microwave Systems," JILA, National Institute of Standards and Technology and the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80309, arXiv:1603.02716, May 31, 2016, pp. 1-10.

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

List of IBM Patents or Patent Applications Treated as Related; (Appendix P), Filed Feb. 8, 2017, 2016; 2 pages.

(21) Appl. No.: **15/275,510**

Naaman et al., "On-Chip Josephson Junction Microwave Switch," Northrop Grumman Systems Corp., Baltimore, Maryland, arXiv:1512.01484, Dec. 7, 2015, pp. 1-10.

(22) Filed: **Sep. 26, 2016**

Pechal et al., "Superconducting Switch for Fast On-Chip Routing of Quantum Microwave Fields," Department of Physics, ETH Zurich, CH-8093 Zurich, Switzerland, arXiv:1606.01031v1, Jun. 8, 2016, pp. 1-8.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
H03H 7/46 (2006.01)
H03H 7/01 (2006.01)

* cited by examiner

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **H03H 7/0138** (2013.01); **H03H 7/46** (2013.01)

Primary Examiner — Robert Pascal

Assistant Examiner — Kimberly Gleen

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H03H 7/0138; H03H 7/46
USPC 333/132
See application file for complete search history.

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Cantor Colburn LLP; Vazken Alexanian

(56) **References Cited**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

4,368,541 A *	1/1983	Evans	H03J 5/0263	455/185.1
6,983,129 B2	1/2006	Satoh et al.			
7,522,015 B2	4/2009	Oikawa et al.			
2007/0201880 A1	8/2007	Nicholson			
2008/0197947 A1 *	8/2008	Gevorgyan	H03J 3/185	334/15

A technique relates to a lossless microwave switch discussed herein. Multiple ports are included in the lossless microwave switch. Tunable filters are included in the lossless microwave switch. Each of the ports is operatively coupled a corresponding one of the tunable filters.

22 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets

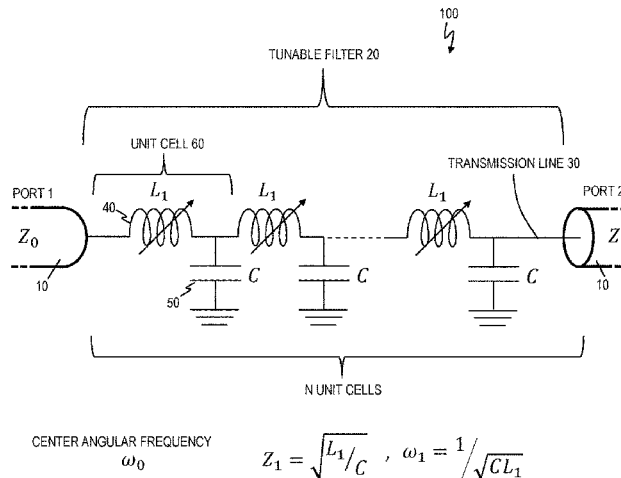


FIG. 2

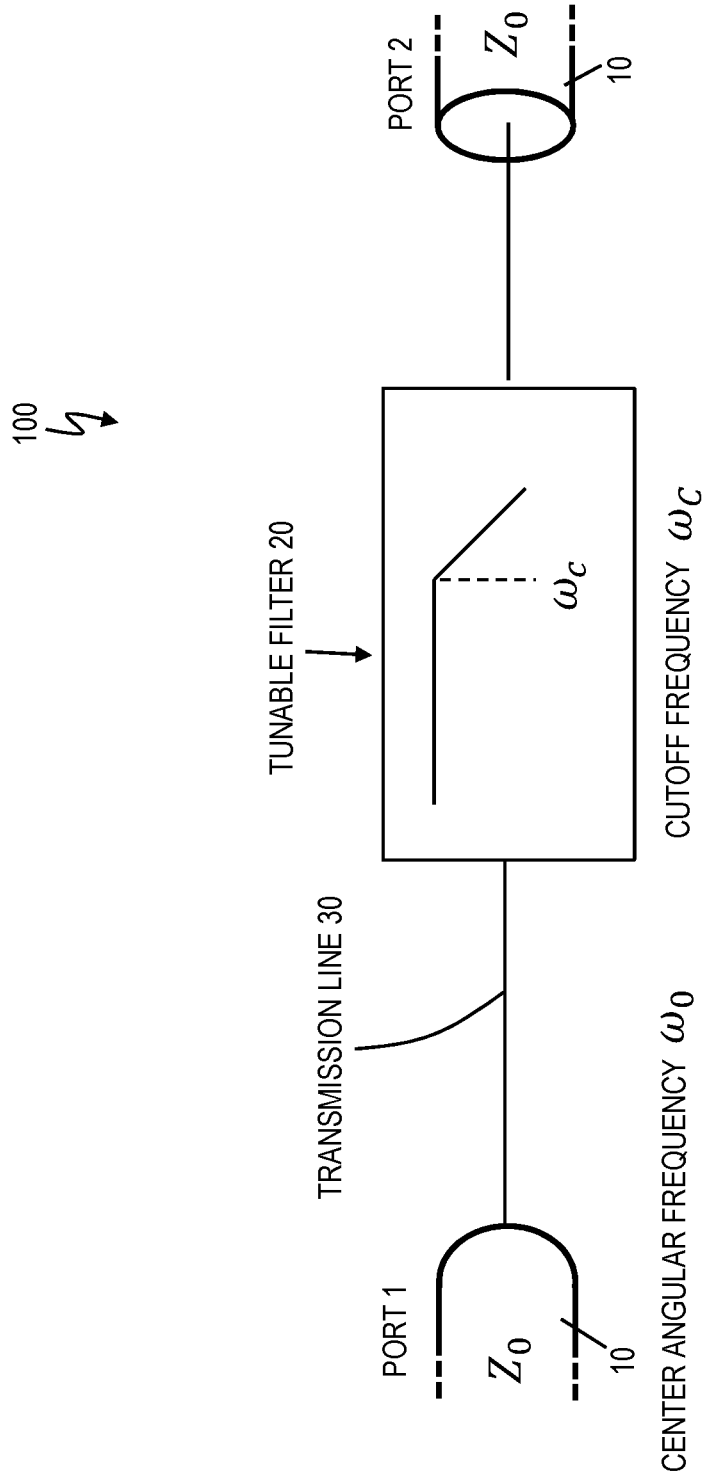
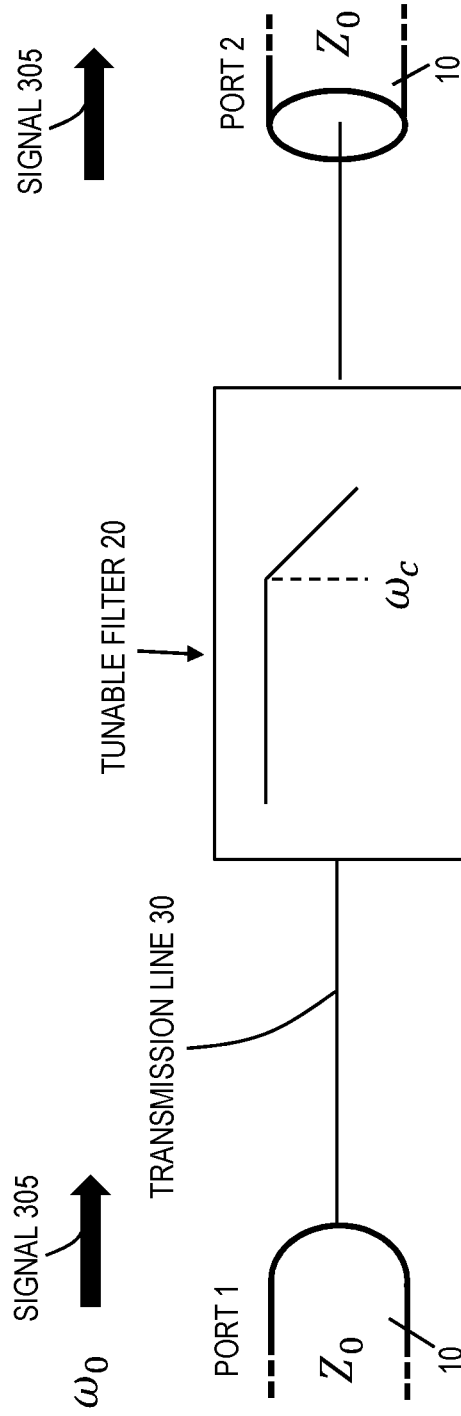


FIG. 3
100

MODE OF OPERATION: TRANSMISSION $\omega_0 < \omega_c$



100

FIG. 4

MODE OF OPERATION: REFLECTION $\omega_0 > \omega_c$

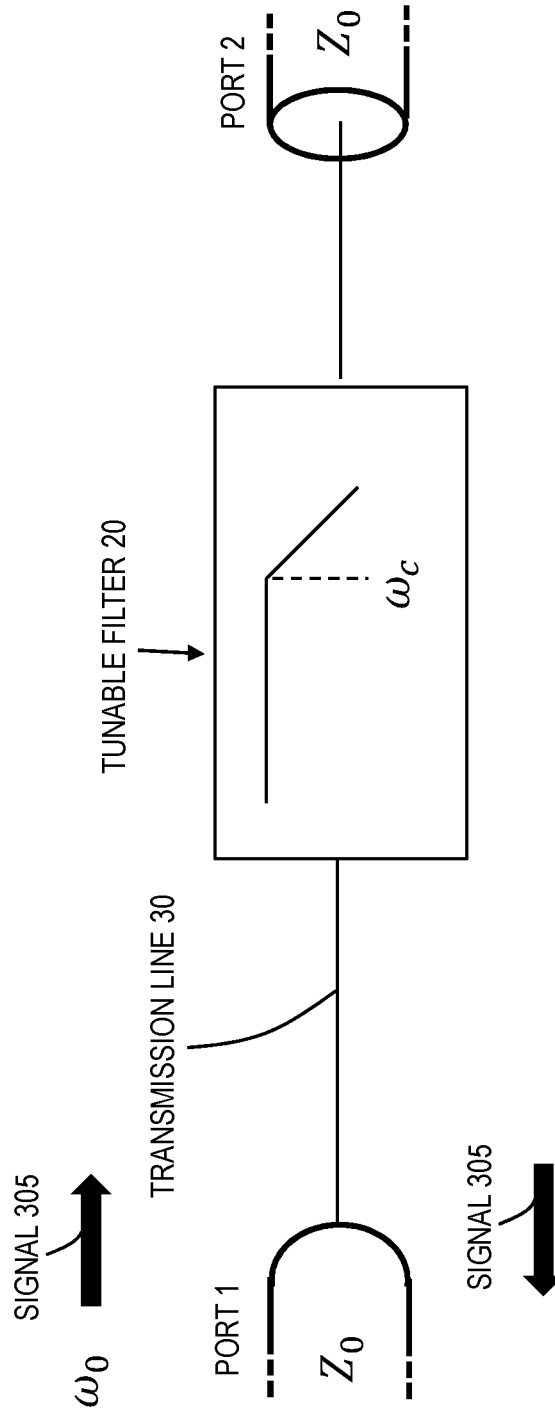
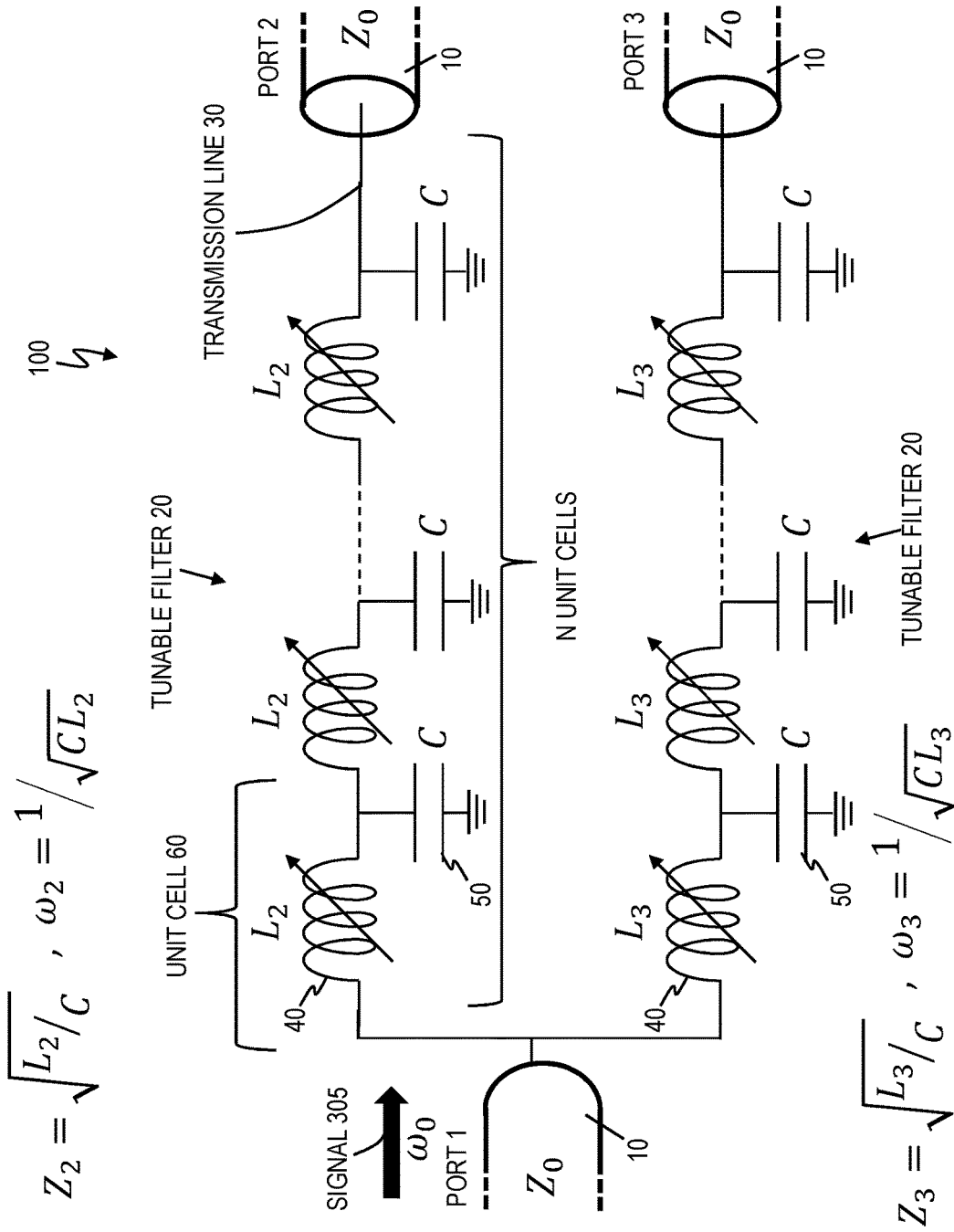
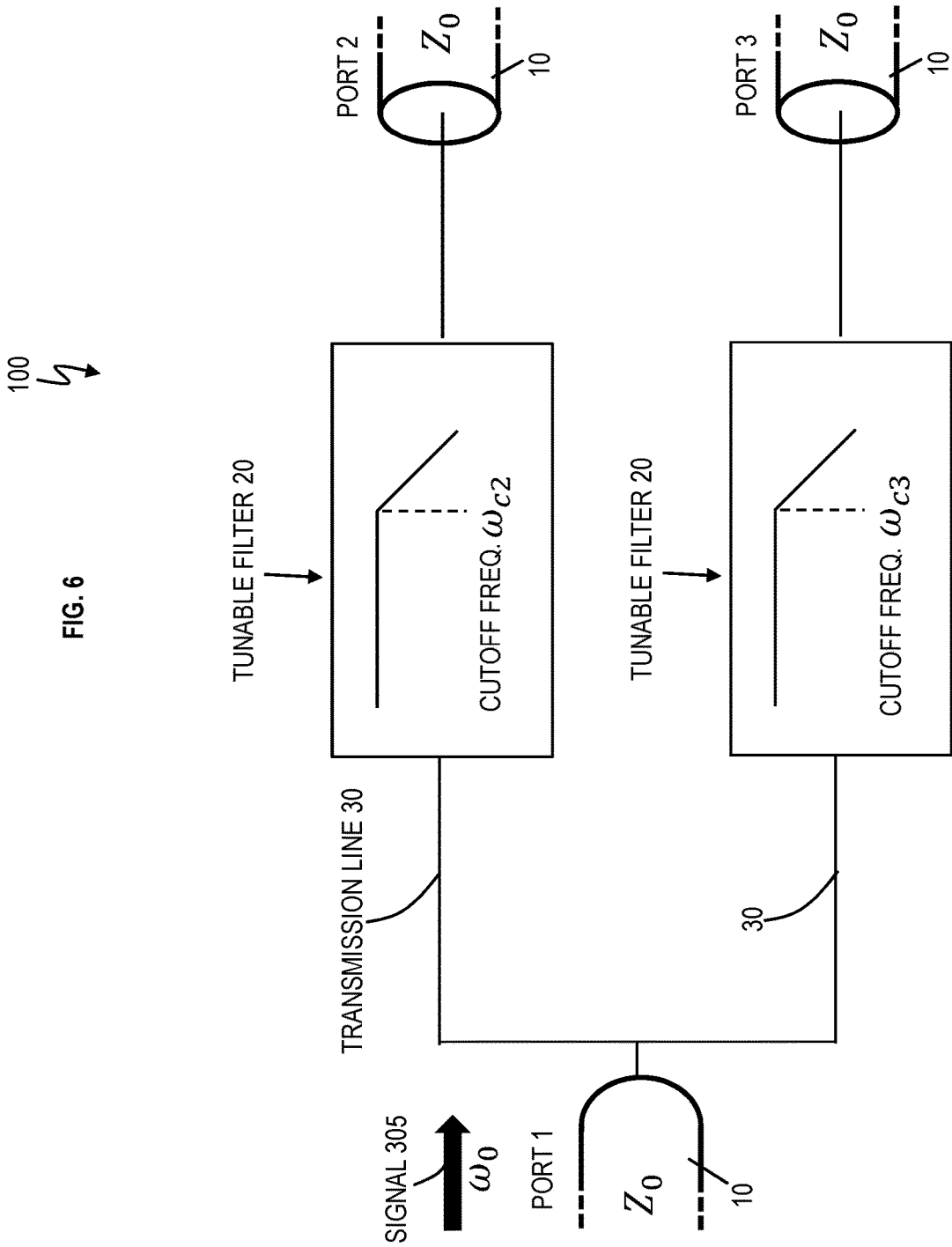
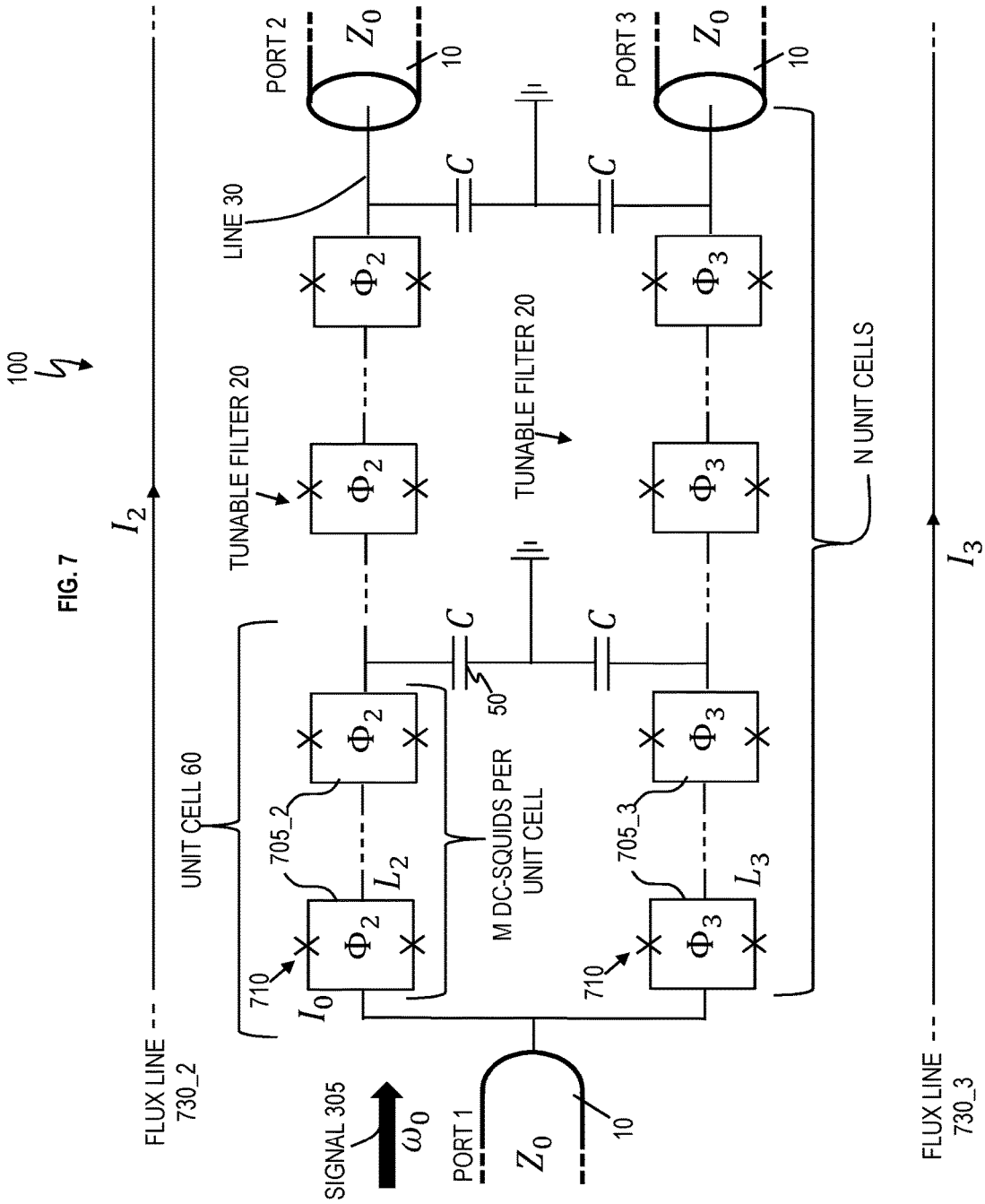


FIG. 5

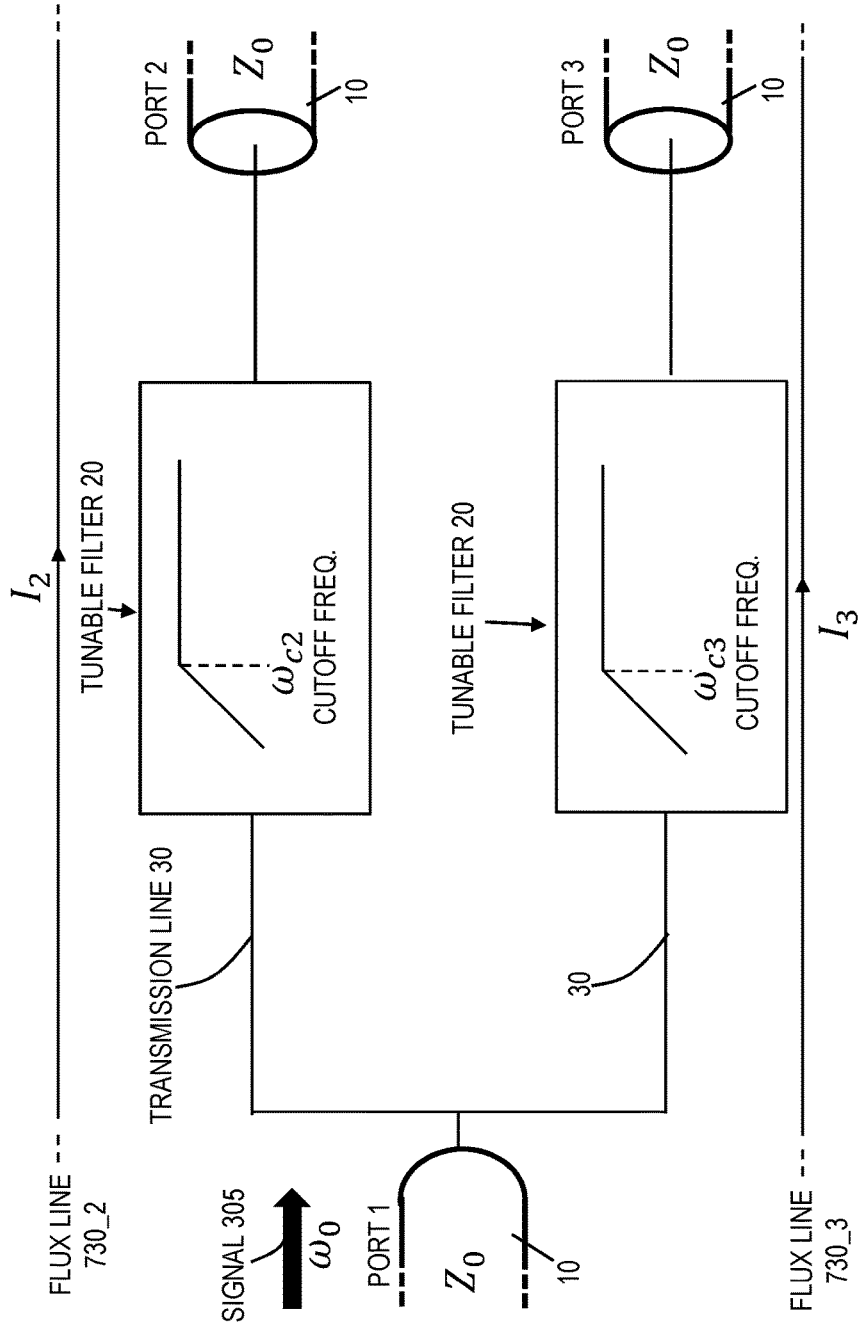






100
h

FIG. 8



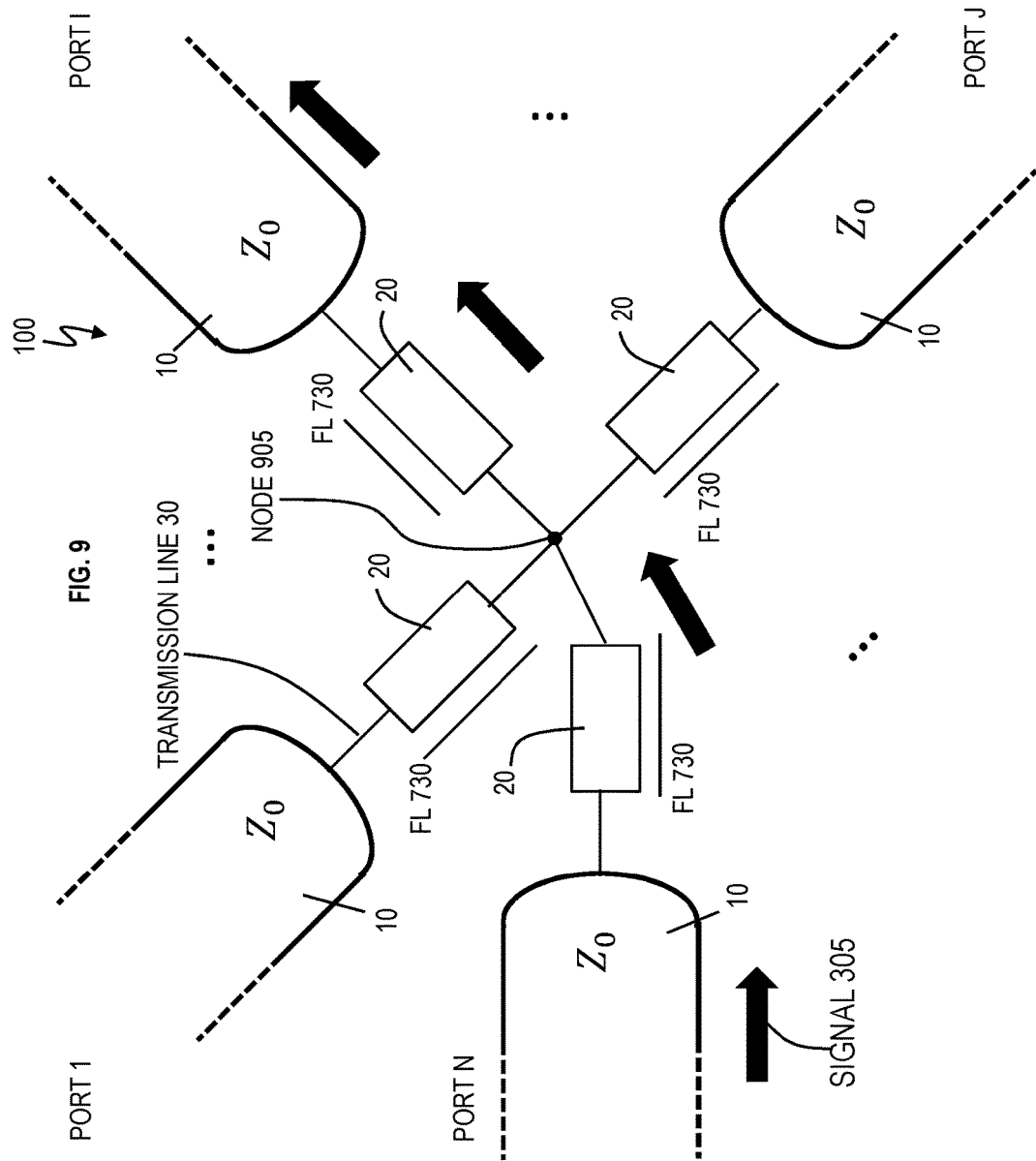


FIG. 9

FIG. 10

1000 ↘

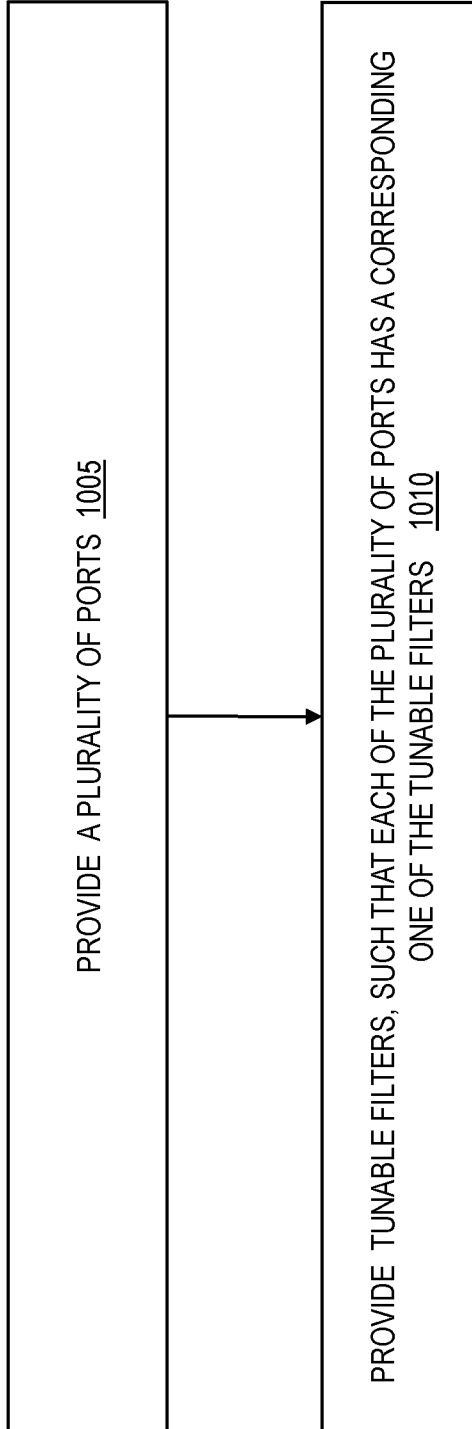


FIG. 11

1100

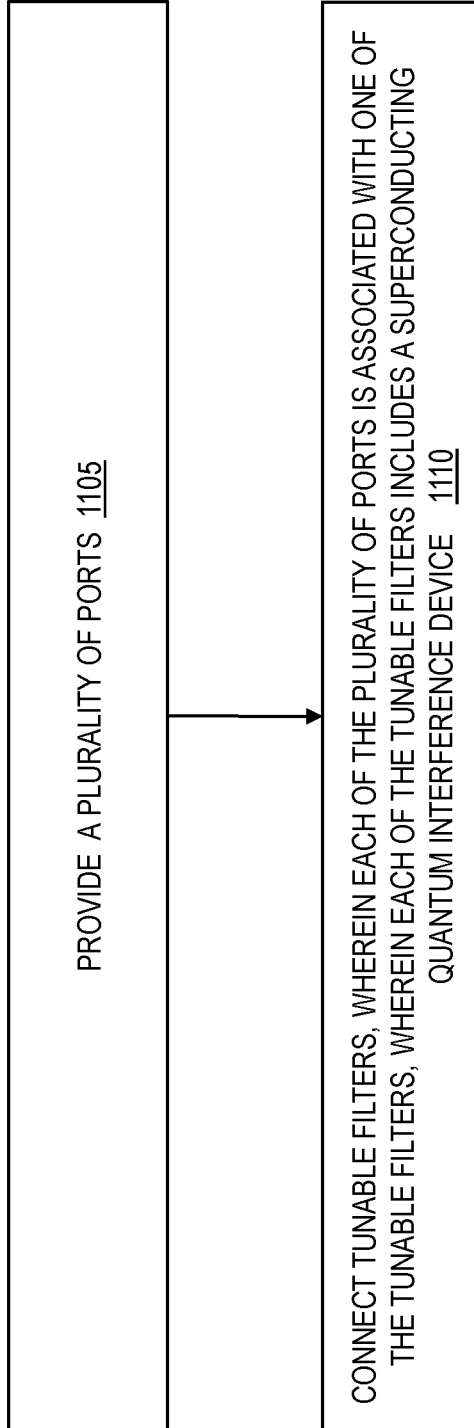



FIG. 12

1200 

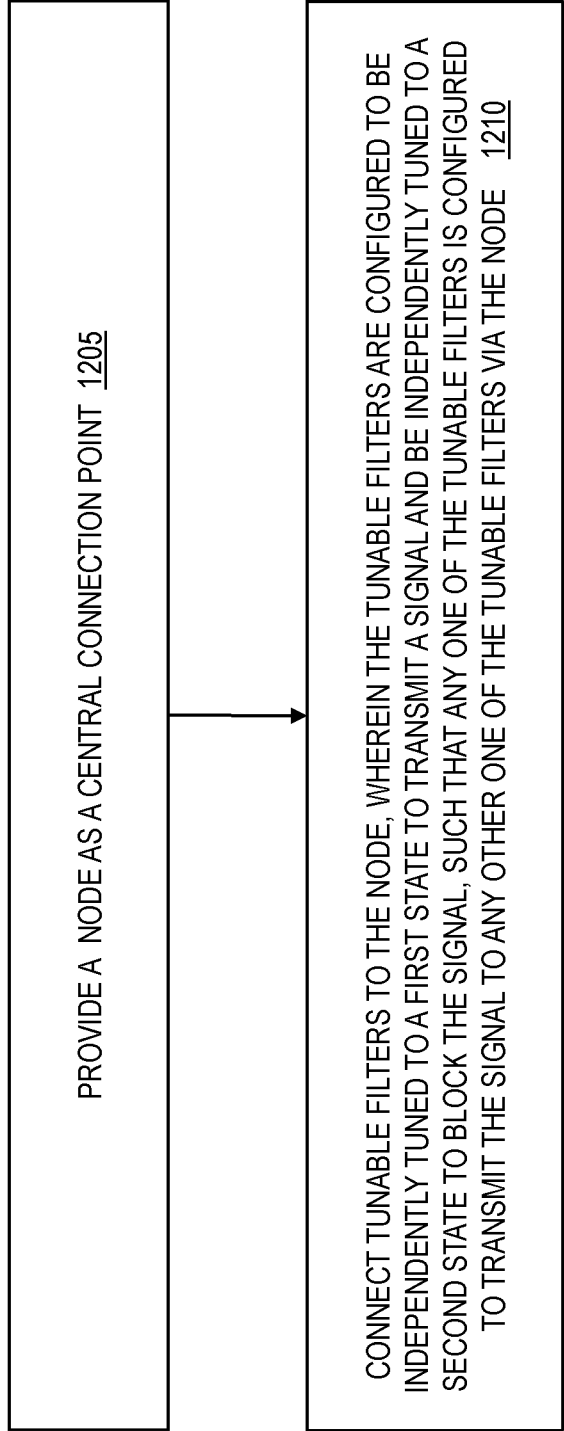
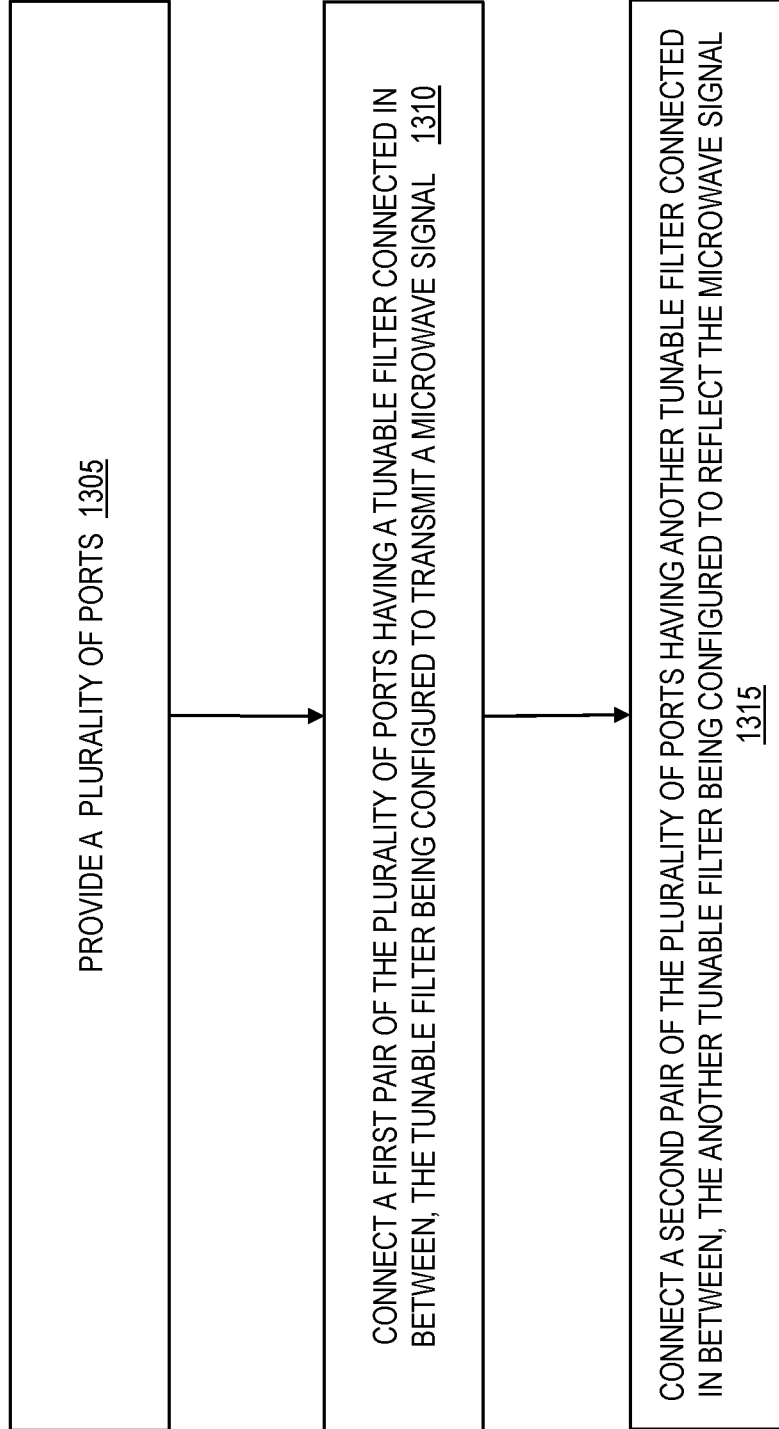


FIG. 13

1300



1

LOSSLESS MICROWAVE SWITCH BASED ON TUNABLE FILTERS FOR QUANTUM INFORMATION PROCESSING

BACKGROUND

The present invention relates to superconducting electronic devices, and more specifically, lossless microwave switches and/or routers based on tunable filters for quantum information processing.

A radio frequency (RF) and microwave switch is a device to route high frequency signals through transmission paths. RF and microwave switches are used extensively in microwave test systems for signal routing between instruments and devices. Incorporating a switch into a switch matrix system enables one to route signals from multiple instruments to single or multiple devices. Similar to electrical switches, RF and microwave switches come in different configurations providing the flexibility to create complex matrixes and automated test systems for many different applications.

In physics and computer science, quantum information is information that is held in the state of a quantum system. Quantum information is the basic entity of study in quantum information theory, and can be manipulated using engineering techniques known as quantum information processing. Much like classical information can be processed with digital computers, transmitted from place to place, manipulated with algorithms, and analyzed with the mathematics of computer science, analogous concepts apply to quantum information. Quantum systems such as superconducting qubits are very sensitive to electromagnetic noise, in particular in the microwave and infrared domains.

SUMMARY

According to one or more embodiments, a lossless microwave switch is provided. The lossless microwave switch includes a plurality of ports and tunable filters. Each of the plurality of ports is operatively coupled to a corresponding one of the tunable filters.

According to one or more embodiments, a method of configuring a lossless microwave switch is provided. The method includes providing a plurality of ports and providing tunable filters. Each of the plurality of ports is operatively coupled to a corresponding one of the tunable filters.

According to one or more embodiments, a lossless microwave switch is provided. The lossless microwave switch includes a plurality of ports and tunable filters. Each of the plurality of ports is associated with one of the tunable filters. Each of the tunable filters includes a superconducting quantum interference device.

According to one or more embodiments, a lossless microwave switch is provided. The lossless microwave switch includes a node and tunable filters connected to the node. The tunable filters are configured to be independently tuned to a first state to transmit a signal and be independently tuned to a second state to block the signal, such that any one of the tunable filters is configured to transmit the signal to any other one of the tunable filters via the node.

According to one or more embodiments, a lossless microwave switch is provided. The lossless microwave switch includes a plurality of ports. A first pair of the plurality of ports has a tunable filter connected in between, in which the tunable filter is configured to transmit a microwave signal. A second pair of the plurality of ports has another tunable

2

filter connected in between, in which the other tunable filter is configured to reflect the microwave signal.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the superconducting microwave switch/router in FIG. 1 according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 3 is a schematic of the superconducting microwave switch/router illustrating transmission as the mode of operation according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 4 is a schematic of the superconducting microwave switch/router illustrating reflection as the mode of operation according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 5 is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of the superconducting microwave switch/router in FIG. 5 according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 7 is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 8 is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 9 is a schematic of a N port superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 10 is a flow chart of a method of configuring a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 11 is a flow chart of a method for configuring a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 12 is a flow chart of a method of configuring a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

FIG. 13 is a flow chart of a method of configuring a superconducting microwave switch/router according to one or more embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Various embodiments are described herein with reference to the related drawings. Alternative embodiments can be devised without departing from the scope of this document. It is noted that various connections and positional relationships (e.g., over, below, adjacent, etc.) are set forth between elements in the following description and in the drawings. These connections and/or positional relationships, unless specified otherwise, can be direct or indirect, and are not intended to be limiting in this respect. Accordingly, a coupling of entities can refer to either a direct or an indirect coupling, and a positional relationship between entities can be a direct or indirect positional relationship. As an example of an indirect positional relationship, references to forming layer "A" over layer "B" include situations in which one or more intermediate layers (e.g., layer "C") is between layer "A" and layer "B" as long as the relevant characteristics and functionalities of layer "A" and layer "B" are not substantially changed by the intermediate layer(s).

In accordance with one or more embodiments, superconducting (or lossless) microwave switches/routers allow one to route quantum signals on demand between different nodes of a circuit or between different ports. Superconducting microwave switches can have many applications in the area of quantum information processing. For example, supercon-

3

ducting microwave switches can be utilized for time-multiplexed readout, time-multiplexed driving (e.g., cross-resonance drives), time-multiplexed characterization of several devices, time-multiplexed interaction between pairs of quantum systems, time-dependent circulation of signals, etc.

According to one or more embodiments, a superconducting microwave switch that can have one input port and N output ports is provided. Also, the superconducting microwave switch can have one output port and N input ports. Each of the ports of the superconducting microwave device is designed to have the same characteristic impedance Z_0 . In one implementation, each input-output pair is connected through a tunable low-pass filter whose cutoff frequency can be tuned in-situ using applied magnetic flux. The tunable low-pass filter can be implemented using a ladder of series inductive elements (e.g., direct current (DC) superconducting quantum interference devices (SQUIDs)) and shunt capacitive elements (e.g., lumped-element capacitors). In another implementation, each input-output pair can be connected through a tunable high-pass filter whose cutoff frequency can be tuned in-situ using applied magnetic flux, and the tunable high-pass filter can be implemented using series capacitive elements (e.g., lumped-element capacitors) and shunt inductive elements (e.g., DC-SQUIDs).

Now turning to the figures, FIG. 1 is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router **100** according to one or more embodiments. FIG. 1 illustrates building blocks of the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** based on a tunable filter **20**. In this example, the tunable filter **20** is a tunable low-pass filter (TLPF). However, it should be appreciated that embodiments are not limited to low-pass filters as discussed further below.

In this example, the microwave switch/router **100** includes ports **10**, such as for example, ports **1** and **2**. The ports **10** are input and output ports. The tunable filter **20** includes one or more unit cells **60**. Each unit cell **60** includes a variable inductor **40** designated as variable inductive element L_1 (and other examples include L_2 , L_3 , and DC-SQUIDs discussed further below), and each unit cell **60** includes a capacitor **50** designated as capacitive element C . In each unit cell **60**, the variable inductor L_1 **40** is connected in series with ports **10**, and a capacitor C **50** is connected to one end of the variable inductor **40** and to ground. There can be N number of unit cells **60** repeated and connected together (in series) in the tunable filter **20** for a total of N unit cells. For N unit cells, the inductors L_1 **40** are connected in series, with each inductor L_1 **40** shunted to ground by its respective capacitor **50**. The interconnection of the ports **10**, variable inductors L_1 **40**, and capacitors C **50** is by transmission line **30**. The transmission line **30** acts as a superconducting wire or waveguide to carry a microwave signal from port **1** via the tunable filter **20** to port **2**, or vice versa. A coaxial cable can connect to the external ends of the ports **10** such that one coaxial cable inputs microwave signals and another coaxial cable outputs the microwave signals. The transmission line **30** can be a stripline, microstrip, etc. The variable inductors **40**, capacitors **50**, and transmission lines **30** are made of superconducting material. Examples of superconducting materials (at low temperatures, such as about 10-100 millikelvin (mK), or about 4 K) include niobium, aluminum, tantalum, etc.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** in FIG. 1 according to one or more embodiments. FIG. 2 is an equivalent circuit to FIG. 1 without depicting the internal details of the tunable filter **20**.

It can be assumed that the microwave signal that is to be transmitted through the superconducting microwave switch/

4

router **100** has a center angular frequency ω_0 . The impedance designation Z_0 is the characteristic impedance at ports **1** and **2** (which can be the input and output ports or vice versa). For example, the characteristic impedance Z_0 can be 50 ohms (Ω) at each port.

For an individual unit cell **60**, the impedance is Z_1 where

$$Z_1 = \sqrt{\frac{L_1}{C}}$$

and where the angular frequency ω_1 of the unit cell **60**

$$\omega_1 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{CL_1}}.$$

The cutoff angular frequency of the tunable filter **20** denoted as ω_c is on the order of the angular resonance frequency ω_1 of the unit cell **60** (or multiple unit cells added together) and it is correlated with ω_1 , meaning ω_c increases and decreases with ω_1 . The exact dependence of ω_c on ω_1 and on the number of unit cells N can be found through a microwave simulation or calculation. From this it follows that the cutoff frequency ω_c of the tunable filter **20** depends on the values of the variable inductor L_1 **40** and the capacitor C **50** (for the one or more unit cells **60**). In particular, the inductance of the variable inductor L_1 **40** controls the cutoff frequency ω_c of the tunable filter **20**, thereby controlling when the tunable filter **20** is operating in transmission or reflection with respect to the microwave signal (center angular frequency ω_0). The inductance of the variable inductors L_1 **40** has an inverse relationship to the cutoff frequency ω_c . For example, when the inductance of the variable inductor L_1 **40** is increased, the cutoff frequency ω_c of the tunable filter **20** is decreased. Conversely, when the inductance of the variable inductor L_1 **40** is decreased, the cutoff frequency ω_c of the tunable filter **20** is increased. It is noted that varying the inductance of the unit cells does not only change the cutoff frequency of the filter but also changes its characteristic impedance. Therefore, it can be desirable that Z_1 or the characteristic impedance of the filter matches the characteristic impedance of the ports as much as possible when the switch is closed, i.e., operated in the transmission mode.

Accordingly, when operating as a closed switch, the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** is controlled to pass the microwave signal (center angular frequency ω_0) in transmission from port **1** to port **2** (or vice versa) by decreasing the inductance of the variable inductor L_1 **40** in the tunable filter **20**. This allows the microwave signal (center angular frequency ω_0) to fall within the low-pass band of the tunable filter **20**. When operating as an open switch, the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** is controlled to block transmission of the microwave signal (center angular frequency ω_0) from port **1** to port **2** (or vice versa) using reflection by increasing the inductance of the variable inductor L_1 **40** in the tunable filter **20**. This allows the microwave signal (center angular frequency ω_0) to fall outside of the low-pass band and thus be attenuated or in other words reflected.

FIG. 3 is a schematic of the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** illustrating transmission as the mode of operation according to one or more embodiments. In FIG. 3, the tunable filter **20** is tuned such that the center angular frequency ω_0 of the incoming microwave signal **305** through

5

the device port is less than the cutoff frequency ω_c of the tunable filter **20**, i.e., $\omega_0 < \omega_c$. In this mode of operation, the tunable filter **20** is configured to operate in transmission because the frequency of the microwave signal **305** is less than the cutoff frequency of the tunable low-pass filter **20**. Under this condition, the microwave signal **305** is transmitted from port **1** through the tunable filter **20** to port **2**, such that the microwave signal **305** is output as desired.

FIG. **4** is a schematic of the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** illustrating reflection as the mode of operation according to one or more embodiments. In FIG. **4**, the tunable filter **20** is tuned such that the center angular frequency ω_0 of the microwave signal **305** is greater than the cutoff frequency ω_c of the tunable filter **20**, i.e., $\omega_0 > \omega_c$. In this mode of operation, the tunable filter **20** is configured to operate in reflection because the frequency of the microwave signal **305** is greater than the cutoff frequency of the tunable low-pass filter **20**. Under this condition, when the microwave signal **305** enters through port **1**, the microwave signal **305** is blocked from passing to port **2** because the tunable filter **20** reflects the microwave signal **305**, thereby not allowing the microwave signal **305** to pass from port **1** to port **2**.

FIG. **5** is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router **100** according to one or more embodiments. FIG. **6** is a block diagram of the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** in FIG. **5** according to one or more embodiments. FIG. **6** is an equivalent circuit to FIG. **5** without depicting the internal details of the tunable filter **20**. FIGS. **5** and **6** are analogous to FIGS. **1** and **2**, except that FIGS. **5** and **6** have been extended to 3 ports instead of 2 ports. It is understood that the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** can be extended to N number of ports as desired according to embodiments.

In the configuration depicted in FIGS. **5** and **6**, there are two tunable filters **20**. One tunable filter **20** is connected between port **1** and port **2**, while the other tunable filter **20** is connected between port **1** and port **3**. Each of the tunable filters **20** is formed of one or more unit cells **60** as discussed above. For explanation purposes, the one or more variable inductors **40** are identified as L_2 in the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **2**, while the one or more variable inductors **40** are identified as L_3 in the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **3**. The tunable filters **20** between ports **1** and **2** and ports **1** and **3**, respectively, are individually controlled such that one can be in transmission while the other is operating in reflection.

The tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2** includes one or more unit cells **60**. Each unit cell **60** includes a variable inductor L_2 **40** and capacitor **50**. In each unit cell **60**, the variable inductor L_2 **40** is connected in series with ports **1** and **2**, and the capacitor **50** is connected to one end of the variable inductor **40** and to ground. There can be N number of unit cells **60** repeated and connected together in the tunable filter **20** for a total of N unit cells between ports **1** and **2**. For the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2**, the impedance of each unit cell is Z_2 where

$$Z_2 = \sqrt{\frac{L_2}{C}}$$

6

and the angular frequency is ω_2 where

$$\omega_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{CL_2}}$$

Similarly, the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **3** includes one or more unit cells **60**. Each unit cell **60** includes a variable inductor L_3 **40** and capacitor **50**. In each unit cell **60**, the variable inductor L_3 **40** is connected in series with ports **1** and **3**, and the capacitor **50** is connected to one end of the variable inductor L_3 **40** and to ground. There can be N number of unit cells **60** repeated and connected together in the tunable filter **20** for a total of N unit cells between ports **1** and **3**. For the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **3**, the impedance of each unit cell is Z_3

$$Z_3 = \sqrt{\frac{L_3}{C}}$$

where and the angular frequency is ω_3 where

$$\omega_3 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{CL_3}}$$

It should be appreciated that additional ports and tunable filters can be analogously added as desired.

In FIG. **2**, the cutoff frequency of the single tunable filter **20** was designated as ω_c above. Because more than one tunable filter **20** is provided in FIGS. **5** and **6**, the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **2** is designated as cutoff frequency ω_{c2} while the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **3** is designated as cutoff frequency ω_{c3} .

For operation of the microwave signal **305** in transmission from/between port **1** to port **2** (or vice versa), the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2** is tuned such that the center angular frequency ω_0 of the microwave signal **305** is less than the cutoff frequency ω_{c2} of the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2**, while the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3** is tuned such that the center angular frequency ω_0 of the microwave signal **305** is much greater than the cutoff frequency ω_{c3} between ports **1** and **3**: $\omega_0 \gg \omega_{c3} < \omega_{c2}$. In this mode of operation, the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2** is configured to operate in transmission because the microwave signal **305** (ω_0) is less than the cutoff frequency ω_{c2} , and therefore, the microwave signal **305** is transmitted from port **1** through the tunable filter **20** to port **2**, such that the microwave signal **305** is output as desired. Concurrently, the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **3** is configured to operate in reflection because the microwave signal **305** (ω_0) is greater than the cutoff frequency (ω_{c3}), and therefore, the microwave signal **305** is blocked from passing between ports **1** and **3**. Additional conditions for transmission from port **1** to port **2** (or vice versa) include $Z_2 \approx Z_0$ for impedance matching. Additional conditions for reflection from/between ports **1** and **3** include $Z_3 \gg Z_0$.

On the other hand, for operation of the microwave signal **305** in transmission from/between port **1** to port **3** (or vice versa), the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3** is tuned such that the center angular frequency ω_0 of the microwave signal **305** is less than the cutoff frequency ω_{c3} of the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3**, while the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2** is tuned such that the center angular frequency ω_0 of the microwave signal **305** is much

7

greater than the cutoff frequency ω_{C2} between ports **1** and **2**: $\omega_{C2} \ll \omega_0 < \omega_{C3}$. In this mode of operation, the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3** is configured to operate in transmission because the microwave signal **305** (ω_0) is less than the cutoff frequency ω_{C3} , and therefore, the microwave signal **305** is transmitted from port **1** through the tunable filter **20** to port **3**, such that the microwave signal **305** is output as desired. Concurrently, the tunable filter **20** connected between ports **1** and **2** is configured to operate in reflection because the microwave signal **305** (ω_0) is greater than the cutoff frequency (ω_{C2}), and therefore, the microwave signal **305** is blocked from passing between ports **1** and **2** in this example. Additional conditions for transmission from port **1** to port **3** (or vice versa) include $Z_3 \approx Z_0$ for impedance matching. Additional conditions for reflection from/between ports **1** and **2** include $Z_2 \gg Z_0$.

FIG. 7 is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router **100** according to one or more embodiments. FIG. 7 is analogous to FIGS. 5 and 6, except that FIG. 7 implements the lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router **100** utilizing direct current (DC) superconducting quantum interference devices (SQUIDs). In FIG. 7, each of the variable inductors **40** (discussed above) is implemented as (variable) DC-SQUIDs **705** in the tunable filter **20**. It is noted that the tunable filters **20** in FIG. 7 are configured to operate in transmission and reflection with respect to each of the tunable filters **20** as discussed above. Also, it is understood that the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** can be extended to N number of ports as desired according to embodiments.

In the configuration depicted in FIG. 7, there are two tunable filters **20** and three ports **10** depicted although more ports **10** and tunable filters **20** can be analogously added. One tunable filter **20** is connected between port **1** and port **2**, while the other tunable filter **20** is connected between port **1** and port **3**. Each of the tunable filters **20** is formed of one or more unit cells **60** as discussed herein.

For the tunable filter **20** connected between port **1** and port **2**, each unit cell **60** includes one or more DC-SQUIDs **705_2**. In the unit cell **60**, the capacitor C **50** connects/shunts the one or more DC-SQUIDs **705_2** to ground. When more than one DC-SQUID **705_2** is utilized in the unit cell **60**, the DC-SQUIDs **705_2** are connected together in series. There can be a total of M DC-SQUIDs **705_2** per unit cell, where M is an integer of 1 or more. The tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2** includes one or more unit cells **60**, such that each unit cells **60** is connected in series with ports **1** and **2**, and the capacitor C **50** is connected to one end of the DC-SQUID **705_2** and to ground. There can be N number of unit cells **60** repeated and connected together in series in the tunable filter **20** for a total of N unit cells between ports **1** and **2**, where N is an integer of 1 or more. For the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2**, the impedance of each unit cell is Z_2 where

$$Z_2 = \sqrt{\frac{L_2}{C}}$$

and the angular frequency is ω_2 where

$$\omega_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{CL_2}}$$

8

It is noted that each DC-SQUID **705_2** has an inductance and/or is an inductive element designated L_2 .

For the tunable filter **20** connected between port **1** and port **3**, each unit cell **60** includes one or more DC-SQUIDs **705_3**. In the unit cell **60**, the capacitor C **50** connects/shunts the one or more DC-SQUIDs **705_3** to ground. When more than one DC-SQUID **705_3** is utilized in the unit cell **60**, the DC-SQUIDs **705_3** are connected together in series.

There can be a total of M DC-SQUIDs **705_3** per unit cell, where M is an integer of 1 or more. The tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3** includes one or more unit cells **60**, such that each unit cell **60** is connected in series with ports **1** and **3**, and the capacitor C **50** is connected to one end of the DC-SQUID **705_3** and to ground. There can be N number of unit cells **60** repeated and connected together in the tunable filter **20** for a total of N unit cells between ports **1** and **3**, where N is an integer of 1 or more. For the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3**, the impedance of each unit cell is Z_3 where

$$Z_3 = \sqrt{\frac{L_3}{C}}$$

and the angular frequency is ω_3 where

$$\omega_3 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{CL_3}}$$

It is noted that each DC-SQUID **705_3** has an inductance and/or is an inductive element designated L_3 .

Now, further information regarding DC-SQUIDs is provided below. A SQUID (Superconducting Quantum Interference Device) is a type of superconducting electronic device well-known to those skilled in the art. In particular, the type of SQUID known as a DC-SQUID includes a loop formed of superconducting wire, superconducting thin-film metal or other superconducting material, interrupted by two or more Josephson junctions (JJ) **710**. The SQUID contains two or more Josephson junctions **710** in a current-carrying loop. As is widely understood by those skilled in the art, via the principle of quantum interference of superconducting currents, the combined Josephson critical current of the Josephson junctions within the SQUID will vary depending on the magnetic flux threading the SQUID loop. Likewise, the Josephson inductance exhibited by the SQUID's Josephson junctions will also vary depending on such magnetic flux (which is magnetic flux Φ_2 for each DC-SQUID **705_2** and magnetic flux Φ_3 for each DC-SQUID **705_3**). Furthermore, arrays of SQUIDs can be arranged in an electrical circuit in such a way as to combine their inductances. It is specified that the magnetic flux of an in-plane loop represents a well-known and well-defined quantity including the magnetic field within the loop, multiplied by the cosine of the angle that the field makes with the axis perpendicular to the loop, integrated across the entire area of the loop. Thus, the SQUID is highly sensitive to both the magnitude and the direction of the magnetic field in its vicinity (for example, flux line **730_2** creates the magnetic field to thereby cause magnetic flux Φ_2 for each DC-SQUID **705_2**, while flux line **730_3** creates the magnetic field to thereby cause magnetic flux Φ_3 for each DC-SQUID **705_3**). The DC-SQUID **705_2** and **705_3** respectively experience the magnetic flux Φ_2 , magnetic flux Φ_3 from the respective magnetic fields created

by flux line **730_2**, flux line **730_3** and thereby its Josephson inductance (the Josephson inductance is designated L_{J2} for DC-SQUID **705_2** and L_{J3} for DC-SQUID **705_3**) is changed. To one skilled in the art, this sensitivity to magnetic field enables the SQUID to be employed as a useful component in an electric circuit, in that the variation of the SQUID's Josephson inductance causes useful changes in the circuit's properties. The inductance L_2 and L_3 of the DC-SQUIDS **705_2** and **705_3**, respectively, corresponds to the Josephson inductance L_{J2} for DC-SQUID **705_2** and L_{J3} for DC-SQUID **705_3**. To independently change/control (increase or decrease) the inductance L_2 and L_3 of the DC-SQUIDS **705_2** and **705_3**, flux lines **730_2** and **730_3** are provided. The flux lines are can be generally referred to as flux lines **730**. The flux lines **730_2** and **730_3** independently apply a magnetic 'bias' field perpendicular to the SQUID loop of the respective DC-SQUIDS **705_2** and **705_3**, in order to set the 'working point' of the SQUID. The flux line **730_2** has current I_2 that creates a magnetic field to cause the magnetic bias flux Φ_2 to change as desired. Similarly, the flux line **730_3** has current I_3 that creates a magnetic field to cause the magnetic bias flux Φ_3 to change as desired. Accordingly, the tunable filters **20** between ports **1** and **2** and ports **1** and **3**, respectively, are individually controlled such that one can be in transmission while the other is operating in reflection.

The inductance L_2 (per unit cell **60**) for the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2** can be defined as $L_2 \approx ML_{J2} + L_S$, where M is the number of DC-SQUIDS **705_2** in a unit cell, where L_{J2} is the Josephson junction inductance of the DC-SQUID, and where L_S is the series inductance of the transmission lines **30** (wires) of each unit cell. The inductance L_2 of each unit cell **60** is primarily based on the Josephson junction inductance L_{J2} . Therefore, Josephson junction inductance L_{J2} is defined below (without the series inductance L_S of the transmission line **30** (wires)): the Josephson junction inductance

$$L_{J2} = \frac{L_{J0}}{\left| \cos\left(\pi \frac{\Phi_2}{\Phi_0}\right) \right|}$$

where $L_{J0} = \Phi_0 / 4\pi I_0$, where I_0 is the critical current of each Josephson junction **710**, wherein Φ_2 is the magnetic flux bias threading the loop, and where

$$\Phi_0 = \frac{h}{2e}$$

(superconducting magnetic flux quantum) in which h is Planck's constant and e is the electron charge.

Similarly, the inductance L_3 (per unit cell **60**) for the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3** can be defined as $L_3 \approx ML_{J3} + L_S$, where M is the number of DC-SQUIDS **705_3** in a unit cell, where L_{J3} is the Josephson junction inductance, and where L_S is the series inductance of the transmission line **30** (wires) of each unit cell. The inductance L_3 of each unit cell **60** is primarily based on the Josephson junction inductance L_{J3} . Therefore, Josephson junction inductance L_{J3} is defined below (without the series inductance L_S of the transmission line **30** (wires)): the Josephson junction inductance

$$L_{J3} = \frac{L_{J0}}{\left| \cos\left(\pi \frac{\Phi_3}{\Phi_0}\right) \right|}$$

where $L_{J0} = \Phi_0 / 4\pi I_0$, where I_0 is the critical current of the (two) Josephson junctions **710**, where Φ_3 is the magnetic flux bias threading the loop, and where

$$\Phi_0 = \frac{h}{2e}$$

(superconducting magnetic flux quantum) in which h is Planck's constant and e is the electron charge. In this analysis, the experimenters assume that the DC-SQUIDS have small loops and that the self-inductance of the DC-SQUID loop is negligible compared to the Josephson inductance of the DC-SQUID.

It is noted that the inductance L_2 is the inductance of one unit cell **60** out of N unit cells ($N \geq 1$) connected in series with the transmission line in the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **2**, and likewise the inductance L_3 is the inductance of one unit cell **60** out of N unit cells ($N \geq 1$) connected in series with the transmission line in the tunable filter **20** between ports **1** and **3**.

It should be understood by one skilled in the art that the tunable filter design discussed herein is not limited to identical unit cells with respect to the inductive and capacitive elements in each unit cell. The identical unit cell picture is mainly presented here for simplicity and ease of understanding. In fact, varying the unit cells based on the microwave filter theory can be advantageous and yield a better performance in terms of the maximum amplitude of ripples in the filter response, the filter flatness, the filter bandwidth, the amount of reflection in-band and out-of-band, the amount of attenuation in the stopping band, etc. Accordingly, it should be appreciated that the unit cells may or may not be identical in one or more embodiments to employ any or more of the advantages discussed above.

As should be recognized, the superconducting microwave switch/router **100** can have one input port and N output ports in one configuration, and/or have one output port and N input ports in another configuration. All ports **10** of the device have the same characteristic impedance Z_0 . Each input-output pair is connected through a tunable low-pass filter whose cut-off frequency can be tuned in-situ using applied magnetic flux. The tunable low-pass filter **20** can be implemented using a ladder of inductive elements (DC-SQUIDS) and capacitive elements (lumped-element capacitors).

By controlling the DC currents I_2 and I_3 respectively applied to the flux lines **730_2** and **730_3**, one can independently set the magnetic bias fluxes Φ_2 and Φ_3 which determine inductance L_2 and L_3 in each chain. This in turn tunes the cutoff angular frequencies ω_{C2} , ω_{C3} of the two tunable filters **20** relative to ω_0 (of the microwave signal **305**), such that one path (between ports **1** and **2**) is in transmission while the other path (between ports **1** and **3**) is in reflection, or vice versa.

To operate in reflection (i.e., block the microwave signal **305**) for either tunable filter **20** (between ports **1** and **2** or between ports **3** and **4**), one increases the DC currents I_2 , I_3 to increase the magnetic bias flux Φ_2 , Φ_3 (within 1 period of the cosine), which then increases the inductance L_2 , L_3 , thereby decreasing the cutoff angular frequency ω_{C2} , ω_{C3} .

Conversely, to operate in transmission (i.e., pass the microwave signal **305**) for either tunable filter **20** (between ports **1** and **2** or between ports **3** and **4**), one decreases the DC currents I_2 , I_3 to decrease the magnetic bias flux Φ_2 , Φ_3 (within 1 period of the cosine), which then decreases the inductance L_2 , L_3 , thereby increasing the cutoff angular frequency ω_{C2} , ω_{C3} .

The DC-SQUIDS **705**, capacitors **50** (with the exception of the dielectric material in the capacitors), flux lines **730**, transmission lines **30**, and Josephson junctions **710** are made of superconducting material. Again, examples of superconducting materials (at low temperatures, such as about 10-100 millikelvin (mK), or about 4 K) include niobium, aluminum, tantalum, etc. A Josephson junction is a nonlinear element formed of two superconducting metals sandwiching a thin insulator such as, for example, aluminum oxide, niobium oxide, etc.

FIG. **8** is a schematic of a superconducting microwave switch/router **100** according to one or more embodiments. FIG. **8** is analogous to FIGS. **1-7**, except for in this implementation, the tunable filters **20** are tunable high-pass filters. By having high-pass filters as the tunable filters **20**, the inductive elements **40**, **705** are interchanged with the capacitive elements **50**. Accordingly, the capacitive elements **50** are in series between port **1** and **2** and between port **1** and **3**, while the inductive elements **40**, **705** (inductor or DC-SQUID) connects to one end of the capacitive element **50** and then connects to ground. For transmission from port **1** to port **2** (or vice versa), the following condition applies: $\omega_{C2} < \omega_0 \ll \omega_{C3}$. For transmission from port **1** to port **3** (vice versa), the following condition applies $\omega_{C3} < \omega_0 \ll \omega_{C2}$.

Now turning to FIG. **9**, FIG. **9** is a schematic of an N-port superconducting microwave router **100** according to one or more embodiments. The N-port superconducting microwave router **100** is generalized/ designed such that there can be a connection made between any pair of ports **10** on the fly using current pulses to the relevant flux lines which in turn flux bias the relevant filters to their appropriate flux bias points. For example, at the moment (or nearly at the moment) the microwave signal **305** reaches a port **10**, the connection can be made between any pair of ports **10** to transmit the microwave signal **305** while all other ports **10** (via their respective tunable filter **20**) block the microwave signal **305**. Accordingly, the microwave signal **305** can be routed between any pair of ports **10** according to the principles discussed herein.

The N-port superconducting microwave router **100** includes port **1**, port I, port J, through port N. Each of the port **1-N** has its own tunable low-pass filter **20**, such that an individual port **10** connects to a tunable filter **20** that connects to a node **905**. The features extensively described above in FIGS. **1-8** apply to FIG. **9** and are not repeated for the sake of brevity and to avoid obscuring FIG. **9**. All of the ports **1-N** are symmetrical and are on the same footing (which is different from the previously described superconducting microwave switches/router **100** above). Being on the same footing means that the node **905** is a central connection that connects all of the ports **1-N**, that each port **10** has its own tunable filter **20**, and that each tunable filter **20** has its own flux line (FL) for tuning its cutoff frequency.

As one example, to route the microwave signal **305** from port N to port I, both tunable filters **20** between port N and node **905** and between port I and node **905** have to be tuned to be in transmission; concurrently, all remaining tunable filters **20** are tuned to be in reflection. This allows the microwave signal **305** to be transmitted from port N to its

tunable filter **20**, to the node **905**, to tunable filter **20** connected to port I, and then transmitted to port I.

Regarding the node **905**, a few technical details are discussed. In general, node **905** is to be as small as possible and ideally lumped with respect to the wavelengths used in the device operation for two reasons: 1) minimize reflections, which can limit the transmission of the routed signal, and 2) enable connecting multiple transmission lines to the node **905**. Furthermore, the ability to connect multiple transmission lines to a common node **905** can require using high impedance (very narrow) wires, which might in turn require designing the tunable filters to have a characteristic impedance which matches the impedance of the connecting lines when the filters are operating in transmission (in order to minimize reflections) in one implementation. Lastly, if the characteristic impedance of the tunable filters is different from the characteristic impedance of the device ports, certain matching networks can be designed and integrated between the filters and the device (in order to allow smooth transmission for the propagating signals).

FIG. **10** is a flow chart **1000** of a method of configuring a lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router **100** according to one or more embodiments. Reference can be made to FIGS. **1-9** discussed herein.

At block **1005**, a plurality of ports **10** are provided. At block **1010**, tunable filters **20** are provided and connected to the ports **10**, such that each of the plurality of ports **10** has a corresponding one of the tunable filters **20**.

The tunable filters **20** connect to a node **905** (a conductive connection point). A plurality of flux lines (FL) **730** are provided, such that an individual one of the plurality of flux lines **730** tunes an individual one of the tunable filters **20** on a one-to-one basis. A plurality of magnetic sources (such as flux lines, current carrying wires, tunable magnets, etc.) are provided, such that an individual one of the plurality of magnetic sources tunes an individual one of the tunable filters **20** on a one-to-one basis. It should be noted that this picture of one flux line controlling one tunable filter can be simplistic. This is because the DC-SQUID's response/inductance is determined by the total flux threading its loop, and therefore any change in the current of other flux lines can alter, in principle, the flux bias experienced by the DC-SQUID. Of course, the induced flux by the other flux lines drops considerably with the distance between them and the DC-SQUID, thus by keeping them sufficiently apart the experimenters can significantly reduce their contribution. Nevertheless, there can be one or more scenarios that in order to tune the flux bias of one filter, one might apply multiple changes to the currents flowing in nearby flux lines such that the currents yield the desired flux bias in the various controlled filters.

The tunable filters **20** include superconducting material. Example superconducting materials at superconducting temperatures (e.g., 10-100 millikelvin (mK), or 4 K) can include niobium, aluminum, tantalum, etc.

The tunable filters **20** can be tunable lossless low-pass filters. Any one of the plurality of ports **10** (e.g., port **1**) is configured to transmit a microwave signal **305** to any other one of the plurality of ports **10** (port **2**). The corresponding one of the tunable filters **20** for the any one of the plurality of ports **10** and the corresponding one of the tunable filters **20** for the any other one of the plurality of ports **10** are both configured to be tuned to transmit (i.e., in transmission) the signal **305** while all other ones of the tunable filters **20** are configured to be tuned to block the signal. Each of the lossless low-pass filters includes one or more DC SQUIDS in series with a center conductor of a transmission line and

shunted by a capacitor to ground. It should be appreciated that a transmission line, such as a coaxial cable, has a center conductor and an outer conductor.

FIG. 11 is a flow chart 1100 of a method for configuring a lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router 100 according to one or more embodiments. Reference can be made to FIGS. 1-9 discussed herein.

At block 1105, a plurality of ports 10 are provided. At block 1110, tunable filters 20 are connected to the plurality of ports 10, where each of the plurality of ports 10 is associated with one of the tunable filters 20, where each of the tunable filters 20 includes a superconducting quantum interference device 705. The tunable filters 20 can be low-pass filters. The tunable filters 20 can be high-pass filters.

FIG. 12 is a flow chart 1200 of a method of configuring a lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router 100 according to one or more embodiments. Reference can be made to FIGS. 1-9 discussed herein.

At block 1205, a node 905 is provided a central connection point. At block 1210, tunable filters 20 are connected to the node 905, where the tunable filters 20 are configured to be independently tuned to a first state (i.e., mode of operation for transmission) to transmit a microwave signal 305 and be independently tuned to a second state (i.e., mode of operation for reflection) to block the microwave signal 305, such that any one of the tunable filters 305 is configured to transmit the signal to any other one of the tunable filters 20 via the node 905.

Any one of the tunable filters 20 and the any other one of the tunable filters 20 are both configured to be in the first state, while all remaining tunable filters 20 are configured to be in the second state, thereby allowing the microwave signal 305 to be transmitted from the any one of the tunable filters 20 to the any other one of the tunable filters 20 via the node 905.

FIG. 13 is a flow chart 1300 of a method of configuring a lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router 100 according to one or more embodiments. Reference can be made to FIGS. 1-9 discussed herein.

At block 1305, a plurality of ports 10 are provided. At block 1310, a first pair of the plurality of ports 10 has at least one tunable filter 20 connected in between, in which the tunable filter 20 is configured to transmit a microwave signal 305. At block 1315, a second pair of the plurality of ports 10 has another tunable filter 20 connected in between, in which the another tunable filter 20 is configured to reflect the microwave signal.

Technical effects and benefits include a lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router. Technical benefits further include low attenuation of transmitted signals <0.05 dB (decibels), fast switching (no resonators) such as in nanoseconds (depending on the mutual inductance between the flux lines and the SQUIDs), and relatively large bandwidth (bw) >280 megahertz (MHz) (which can be significantly enhanced by allowing certain variation in the unit cells). Also, technical benefits further include relatively large on/off ratio >20 dB. The lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router can tolerate relatively large powers >-80 dBm (where 0 dBm corresponds to 1 milliwatt) by adding more SQUIDs and increasing their critical current. The lossless/superconducting microwave switch/router can be fabricated with Nb Josephson junctions to operate at 4K, can be designed for any frequency range, and provides a scalable scheme that can be easily extended to 1 input-N outputs (or vice versa).

The term "about" and variations thereof are intended to include the degree of error associated with measurement of the particular quantity based upon the equipment available at the time of filing the application. For example, "about" can include a range of $\pm 8\%$ or 5%, or 2% of a given value.

Aspects of the present invention are described herein with reference to flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams of methods, apparatus (systems), and computer program products according to embodiments of the invention. It will be understood that each block of the flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams, can be implemented by computer readable program instructions.

The flowchart and block diagrams in the Figures illustrate the architecture, functionality, and operation of possible implementations of systems, methods, and computer program products according to various embodiments of the present invention. In this regard, each block in the flowchart or block diagrams can represent a module, segment, or portion of instructions, which includes one or more executable instructions for implementing the specified logical function(s). In some alternative implementations, the functions noted in the block can occur out of the order noted in the figures. For example, two blocks shown in succession can, in fact, be executed substantially concurrently, or the blocks can sometimes be executed in the reverse order, depending upon the functionality involved. It will also be noted that each block of the block diagrams and/or flowchart illustration, and combinations of blocks in the block diagrams and/or flowchart illustration, can be implemented by special purpose hardware-based systems that perform the specified functions or acts or carry out combinations of special purpose hardware and computer instructions.

The descriptions of the various embodiments of the present invention have been presented for purposes of illustration, but are not intended to be exhaustive or limited to the embodiments discussed herein. Many modifications and variations will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the described embodiments. The terminology used herein was chosen to best explain the principles of the embodiments, the practical application or technical improvement over technologies found in the marketplace, or to enable others of ordinary skill in the art to understand the embodiments discussed herein.

What is claimed is:

1. A lossless microwave switch comprising: a plurality of ports; and tunable filters, wherein each of the plurality of ports is operatively coupled to a corresponding one of the tunable filters, wherein the tunable filters are lossless low-pass filters.
2. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, wherein the tunable filters connect to a node.
3. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of flux lines; wherein an individual one of the plurality of flux lines tunes an individual one of the tunable filters on a one-to-one basis; or wherein one or more flux lines of the plurality of flux lines contributes to tuning the individual one of the tunable filters.
4. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of magnetic sources, such that an individual one of the plurality of magnetic sources tunes an individual one of the tunable filters on a one-to-one basis.

15

5. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, wherein the tunable filters comprise superconducting material.

6. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, wherein the each of the lossless low-pass filters includes one or more DC SQUIDS in series with a center conductor of a transmission line and shunted by a capacitor to ground.

7. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, wherein the tunable filters are lossless high-pass filters.

8. The lossless microwave switch of claim 7, wherein each of the lossless high-pass filters include a capacitor shunted by one or more DC SQUIDS.

9. The lossless microwave switch of claim 1, wherein any one of the plurality of ports is configured to transmit a signal to any other one of the plurality of ports.

10. The lossless microwave switch of claim 9, wherein the corresponding one of the tunable filters for any one of the plurality of ports and the corresponding one of the tunable filters for the any other one of the plurality of ports are both configured to be tuned to transmit the signal while all other ones of the tunable filters are configured to be tuned to block the signal.

11. A method of configuring a lossless microwave switch, the method comprising:

providing a plurality of ports; and

providing tunable filters, such that each of the plurality of ports is operatively coupled to a corresponding one of the tunable filters, wherein the tunable filters are lossless low-pass filters.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the tunable filters connect to a node.

13. The method of claim 11, further comprising providing a plurality of flux lines;

wherein an individual one of the plurality of flux lines tunes an individual one of the tunable filters on a one-to-one basis; or

wherein one or more flux lines of the plurality of flux lines contributes to tuning the individual one of the tunable filters.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising providing a plurality of magnetic sources, such that an individual one

16

of the plurality of magnetic sources tunes an individual one of the tunable filters on a one-to-one basis.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the tunable filters comprise superconducting material.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein any one of the plurality of ports is configured to transmit a signal to any other one of the plurality of ports.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the corresponding one of the tunable filters for the any one of the plurality of ports and the corresponding one of the tunable filters for the any other one of the plurality of ports are both configured to be tuned to transmit the signal while all other ones of the tunable filters are configured to be tuned to block the signal.

18. A lossless microwave switch comprising:
a plurality of ports; and
tunable filters, wherein each of the plurality of ports is associated with one of the tunable filters, wherein each of the tunable filters includes a superconducting quantum interference device.

19. The lossless microwave switch of claim 18, wherein the tunable filters are low-pass filters.

20. The lossless microwave switch of claim 18, wherein the tunable filters are high pass filters.

21. A lossless microwave switch comprising:
a node; and
tunable filters connected to the node, wherein the tunable filters are configured to be independently tuned to a first state to transmit a signal and be independently tuned to a second state to block the signal, such that any one of the tunable filters is configured to transmit the signal to any other one of the tunable filters via the node.

22. The lossless microwave switch of claim 21, wherein the any one of the tunable filters and the any other one of the tunable filters are both configured to be in the first state, while all remaining ones of the tunable filters are configured to be in the second state, thereby allowing the signal to be transmitted from the any one of the tunable filters to the any other one of the tunable filters via the node.

* * * * *